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SENATOR COORDSEN: Senator Aguilar.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. LB 977 is a simple bill. Its genesis was an audit--an audit by the State Auditor that pointed out that the only persons authorized to process applications and make disbursements are the director and deputy director as designated by the director. Because the director and the deputy director cover the entire state and may be out of the office at the same time and because the Veterans' Assistance (sic--Aid) Fund disperses money for needs that might be in an emergency nature, the administration needs to be done quickly. Because of this, the director needs to be able to designate other personal, like his assistant, to administer the fund in his absence. A second reason is the appeal process. An appeal of an application goes to the director, so the director needs to have the initial process handled by someone else in the department. This change in administration of the fund makes sense. I ask for your vote to advance LB 977. Thank you.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Senator Aguilar. You've heard the opening. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, there is not much new language in this bill. In fact, it does not cover a complete line, an entire line. But I have to ask Senator Aguilar a question or two.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Senator Aguilar, will you respond?

SENATOR AGUILAR: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: In this new language, but I have to go to the line above, "The director, a deputy director, or a designee of the director or deputy director..." Why is the deputy director going to be allowed to have a designee rather than leaving this in the hands of the director? And I'll tell you why I'm asking. I have not seen situations where we let people below the one who has ultimate authority designate somebody. Let's say the director designates the deputy director because the director is